

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper.*



THE LAST WARNING OF FERGUSON.

THE DOONES OF EXMOOR.

CHAPTER V.

THERE is a choice now-a-days for the traveller or the tourist, in proceeding from Lynton to Coombmartin. He may either skirt the coast, or nearly so, regaling himself with sight of glade and gorge; of wooded hill and moorland mountain; of smiling vale with silvery stream, or quiet bay with beetling cliffs; of landward barrow and mead, or seaward rock and surge. Or he may proceed by an inland road, less trying to the muscles, but comparatively barren in striking scenery.

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In Sir Edward's day, however, whilst there was a choice of tracts many, there was little difference between them in point of romantic interest and difficulty, if difficulty lie in climbing steep woody ravines, or in winding on open moors between rush-hidden swamps and scattered rollers of detached rock.

The course by which he chose to accompany the miner was much the same as that prescribed for pedestrians in our own times, if they would see coast scenery, in some respects unique and in all respects enchanting. Passing by Woodabay, they descended into a deep spur valley extending to the sea, and there denominated

S S PRICE ONE PENNY OR WITH COLOURED ILLUSTRATION TWOPENCE.

Heddon's Mouth, which, although it was winter, presented an appearance of imposing grandeur. Bordered by inclosing heights well covered with pine and under-wood, and threaded by a stream which darted through patches of snow-covered sward, or splashed over beds of slaty rock, forming diminutive cascades, it seemed to say, "What, think you, must I be in all the verdant bloom and laughing sunshine of summer's glowing days?"

Creeping slowly up the zigzag path to Trentishoe, they passed its tiny church, and rode briskly on until a wild ravine was reached beyond Holstone Barrow, down whose precipitous sides they were obliged to proceed with caution. Beside the flashing, humming rivulet which winds through this irregular fantastically shaped glen, there are now a few cottages with pretty gardens before them, which relieve the solitude of the place, and give an additional charm to its beauties; but *then*, it must have been a dreary wilderness, suggestive of elfs or Doones, and awe-inspiring by its gloomy features and impressive silence. From thence their way lay over Hangman Hill, and then across a partially cultivated strip of land to the slopes of the coomb, where, passing by a silver mine and through a narrow artificial defile with an occasional tunnel, they emerged on the road, which runs through the village, and constitutes its only and almost interminable street. Proceeding to the upper extremity, the miner ascended the hill to the right, and, halting before a small cottage embowered in trees, requested Sir Edward to alight. A good-looking, well-dressed young female came to the garden gate, and thanked the baronet for his kindness in coming so far, with a modest yet dignified air, which created a decided prepossession in her favour. There were traces of sorrow, indeed, on her countenance, which he could not but notice, and the fading lustre of eye and cheek, whilst it told of beauty bright that had been, told also of some quick consuming care, that had robbed her of her charms before the spring of womanhood was past.

"He's expecting you, sir," she said, "and will be easy when he has seen you." And, leading the way, she ascended a narrow staircase, which introduced them at once to a small room, in the corner of which, on a couch, lay the man whose earnest message had brought Sir Edward to the chamber of death. His pale and hollow countenance, his restless burning hands, and brow thick beaded with perspiration, announced that the lamp of life was fast expiring, though there was still a brightness in the eye, as if the undying soul were looking through it, which seemed to evidence that the mind was as stirring and vigorous as ever.

"Sir Edward," he said, in a husky voice, "you have come to see the close of a misspent life. We have met before; but you cannot recognise me now. Once, I was the happy child of godly parents. Once, I was the husband of a wife who strove to make me, like herself, a Christian—my first wife. But I sinned away the pious impressions of youth, became hardened against the solicitations of affection, and went step by step along the path of folly, pride, and recklessness, until at last I entered that nest of foul birds, the Warren, and became a Doone. Wounded in the fray which put an end to the gang, I escaped hither with my wife, the daughter of the man who fetched you. She was foolish enough to marry sorrow by marrying me, a year ago, and, strange to say, she is mourning at the prospect of losing such a worthless object of regard."

"Your name is Ferguson, perhaps," said the baronet kindly.

"Even so, Sir Edward, even so. Would that it had

never been borne by one who has disgraced it so much; but it will soon be blotted out for ever."

"As you had godly parents, Captain Ferguson," remarked the baronet, "you will remember where it is written, 'There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared,' and who it was that said, 'I am come to seek and to save that which was lost.'"

"I know, I know, Sir Edward," he replied, with a wild look; "but all those words are burning in my heart like glowing coals. The wine is turned to wormwood within me. The life-giving honey of the truth is converted into the poison of death. The hand of mercy is closed, and there is nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment. I did not send for you, however, that we might speak of such things: the case is hopeless; but that we might speak on a matter that concerns the welfare of your house. The thought of dying without forewarning you, augmented my wretchedness; and now," he said to his wife, "help me up a little, and put a pillow for me to lean against."

"Sir Edward," he proceeded, "you have had a visitor lately, and have been warming into stinging activity in your very bosom, a viper whose fangs will prove fatal, unless you crush it without pity. Lord Auberley is as much your enemy as mine; he is the enemy of all that is fair and good. Utterly devoid of principle, he cares not how he compasses his ends, provided he secures them. Godless and worthless, he would sacrifice you any moment to King Charles's favour, and smile to see your daughter's heart crushed, if it pleased his vanity, or were the only alternative to the furtherance of his selfishness. I have not strength to tell you all he is; but he dare not let it be known at court that he has been a guest at Lee Abbey. If you trust him, you trust a man who will, sooner or later, bring a trail of perpetual wretchedness into your home and your heart."

He sank back, exhausted by the effort of saying so much, and saying it so warmly, and, stretching out his fleshless hand, grasped that of Sir Edward, who gazed on him with mingled feelings of incredulous amazement and bewildering apprehension. His wife administered a soothing draught to the overspent sufferer, and whilst thus engaged, the baronet's reflections were of this kind. Here is a man whose wounded feelings have made him vengeful, who, baulked by the adversary he vilifies, has brooded over his supposed wrongs until his heart has conjured up a character consistent with the bitterness he entertains, and which has become stamped on his fancy as a perfect portrait. He is mistaking, no doubt, the exaggerations of his passions, and the dark picture his vexed spirit has drawn, for the real truth of the case, as it must stand apparent to other eyes.

Having recovered himself a little, the dying man, as though reading his visitor's thoughts, said hoarsely, "You don't believe me, Sir Edward; you can't believe me. My words are so burning, that you think of them only as the ravings of an excited imagination, or the utterances of an angered heart; but if there is such a thing as truth, you have listened to it. If I am but the means of guarding you from the fangs of the wolf in sheep's clothing, there will be one bright spot in my existence—just one. All the rest, since I stepped over the threshold of parental restraint, has been nought but darkness; and now, the truth of a world to come, which I have hidden from me, comes back with the memory of childhood, and reveals itself when it is too late to profit by it."

"Now stay, my friend," interposed Sir Edward. "When the Spirit fastens truth on the heart, his designs are merciful and gracious."

"But mine," he replied, "are not the convictions of the Spirit; they are but the stings of conscience."

"How know you that, my friend?" responded the baronet. "And even the stings of conscience should turn you to Him of whom you heard in your early days, the Saviour who is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him."

"Merciful is he, merciful," he answered in a subdued tone, "or I could not have been thus guilty; but how shall such a mocker turn to him now?"

Sir Edward reached himself a Bible, which lay on a chest of drawers, and opening it, read such passages of Scripture as suited his case, making appropriate observations now and then; but it did not seem as if a ray of light penetrated the dying man's soul. "Fanny," he said, turning to his wife, on whom the word of God and the baronet's remarks had made an impression, and who was weeping bitterly, "keep those tears for other occasions. You too will be an accusing spirit. You too——"

But he could say no more. His eyes became fixed; his twitching hands convulsively clutched the bed-wrapper, and with a deep-drawn moaning sigh he yielded up his spirit to the Judge of all.

The scene was solemn and impressive, and the baronet, like a faithful man of God, endeavoured to turn it to profitable account on behalf of the inmates of the cottage. This done, he returned to Lee Abbey, mourning over the sad end of the outlaw, and pondering the strange disclosures he had so emphatically uttered.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SNOWS of winter had scarcely disappeared before the warming breath of an early spring, ere the furies of civil strife that had caused blood to be shed in the north, began to fire with their death-dealing inspiration the western counties, where the contest was carried on with much vigour. Not only in cities and towns, but in remote villages, the war spirit was awakened, which set Briton against Briton, and produced the melancholy spectacle of a nation divided against itself. Sets or pieces of armour were looked up with wondrous assiduity, and weapons that had long grown rusty were brought out and furbished with eager haste. All night as well as all day, innumerable blacksmiths clanked on their anvils, making or renewing instruments of death. Old helmets were burnished up like new, and old swords were well sharpened for certain execution. Yea, such was the rage for slaughter, that spears and staves, pikes and bills, long bows and cross bows were in request, and everything that wore the least resemblance to uniform was pressed into service, as though fighting were one of the pastimes of humanity.

The Marquis of Hertford had been appointed general on the king's behalf, in the west, and had established his head quarters in Bath. Lord Auberley commanded a troop of dragoons belonging to his forces, and was one of the officers appointed to act under Sir Ralph Hopton, when sent into Cornwall with five hundred horse to head the Royalists. Through the exertions of Sir Bevil Grenvil a large body of troops was collected in that county, by which the Parliamentarians were driven from Launceston and Saltash; and so successful were they, that, having beaten Ruthven, who had been sent against them across the Tamar with a strong detachment, they were able to push their advantages as far as Tavistock.

The sad consequences of the struggle were keenly felt by both parties, and a council of the leading men of Devon and Cornwall having been summoned, it was agreed that these counties should disband their forces

and observe a strict neutrality. Sir Edward de Wichehalse was present at this assembly, and strongly advocated the adopted measure. He had thus an opportunity of seeing his former visitor, Lord Auberley, who met him with great cordiality, and was warm as ever in his professions of gratitude and attachment.

"I have witnessed a melancholy spectacle since we last met," Sir Edward remarked to him, "the death of Ferguson, who was badly wounded in the Warren and never recovered. His end was a miserable one truly—such an end as I should not like often to witness. He sent for me, as he had something to communicate; and now, though I have no right to meddle with the character of a comparative stranger, I must tell you that yours was painted by him in darker shades than I like to describe."

"I am not surprised at it," replied Auberley. "With such a man, one must cease to be virtuous, in order to escape the venom of malicious slander. Had I been like himself, he would have thought better of me; but I stood in his way, and of course, as he sought to take my life, he would make no scruple of dealing hardly with my character."

The baronet was at a loss how it became him to reply. With nothing before him but the evidence of a man who had himself confessed to his abandoned state of heart and life, he could not venture on pressing the testimony of the dead any further. At the same time, an undefined suspicion, which he could not shake off, prevented his immediate admission of a counter avowment. He was therefore about to say, "You will excuse my allusion to Ferguson's remarks," when Lord Auberley went on to observe—

"I should be sorry to create in your mind the impression that I consider myself a guileless man; but I venture to deny in the strongest terms the representations of that reprobate, whatever they may have been, and beg to refer you to gentlemen here present who know me well. I would even crave an investigation, the more so as I value your friendship so highly, and am desirous, having profited under your roof in matters of religion, to renew, at some future time, an acquaintance that has proved so valuable."

There was an apparent candour in these remarks, which did much to restore Sir Edward's hopeful opinion, and led him to conclude once more that Ferguson's report was the offspring of an unhealed mind, as well as of a revengeful spirit. Every one with whom he conversed had a good word for Auberley, though they were principally men whose moral standard was not very high; and that he might show an unprejudiced mind himself, he expressed the hope that his former guest would some day be able to visit Lee Abbey again.

"I know of nothing that would give me so much pleasure," said his lordship; "and as there is the prospect of a lull, I may be able to gratify myself shortly. Colonel Giffard, who is a personal friend of mine, proceeds to the North to-morrow, Sir Edward, and will be glad of your company on the way, I am sure."

Although the two gentlemen who rode over Heathfield together the following morning were not entire strangers, their acquaintance was so slight as to occasion a reserve, at first, on all topics which might possibly involve a difference of sentiment. They supposed each other's opinions on the great questions of the day to be much at variance, and spoke guardedly; but Sir Edward hoped that, without appearing to seek information, he might be able to glean something respecting Auberley, which would neutralize the effects of Ferguson's disclosures.

"This is a wild place about Christmas-time, Sir Edward," said the colonel, "as I can bear witness. I was as near lost in the snow last winter in one of these hollows as could be, and had I not been fortunate enough to get help from a strapping trooper, his Majesty would have been minus a loyal cavalier. The good people about here are sadly put to it sometimes, on account of the snow-drifts. If a death occurs, there is no such thing as getting to church with the corpse, and they have to adopt methods for embalming which would greatly surprise the Easterns, I expect. But when people are put to their shifts, they must do as they can—a maxim I was obliged to enforce upon Auberley, when, having lost a couple of horses in the affair at Saltash, he was obliged to ride triumphantly into Tavistock on a galloway that whetted the appetite of every carrion-loving cur along the road."

"It must have been somewhat mortifying to such a dashing soldier," said Sir Edward; "but his martial spirit would help him, no doubt, to forget the meanness of his charger."

"As a matter of appearance, I believe it would. A finer young fellow never drew blade."

"He is high in favour at court, I understand," remarked the baronet, inquiringly.

"Why, yes. He's much thought of, and I may say looked after; but as there's a lady in the case, it won't do for me to open out. It's neither here nor there, however, to say that the daughter of titled folk, whom their Majesties delight to honour, has taken a fancy to this young nobleman, though I believe, from what report says, that he is looking elsewhere. Her Majesty, Queen Henrietta, being in the secret, has shown him some attention in consequence, which, of course, is flattering."

"She therefore considers him a subject worthy of such attention," observed the baronet.

"Certainly," replied Giffard; "as worthy as a man need to be. He was a little wild, they say, in the North; but he's a sterling fellow, and loyal to the back-bone. You saw something of him, I heard, after he was picked up half-dead in Lynn wood; and now I bethink me, he helped to bring those rascally Doones to book."

"And thus I also am reminded," said De Wichehalse, "that I have to thank you for assisting in the rescue of my daughter from a couple of them."

"Yes, to be sure; I disposed of one good-for-nothing fellow, and we should have finished the other if the ladies hadn't required attention."

"His evil deeds are at an end now, however," said De Wichehalse, sadly. "I saw him die in Coombmartin. Poor Ferguson; his death was as wretched as his life."

"Could it be Ferguson of Southmolton?" asked the colonel.

"I believe so; at any rate, from that neighbourhood."

"I knew him, then, and his parents before him. Right good people they were, though they held sentiments similar to the new-fangled views going about now-a-days. He served in the army of the North, and was wishful to win the lady who has a penchant for Auberley. He bore a miserable character, I believe, and was concerned in some forging affair, which obliged him to leave the army. So he's dead, is he? and he died hard? That comes of bringing up children in too much religious strictness."

"It wasn't his religious training, Colonel, that brought him to a bad end," replied the baronet. "Had he followed the admonitions of his parents, and trodden in their footsteps, his life would have been honourable and his end peace."

"It may be so, it may be so, Sir Edward, though I have my own opinions on the matter. My religion, you know, is of the old school, and therefore we shall most likely understand each other better if we cast a bait for another subject of conversation."

MEN I HAVE KNOWN.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

WORDSWORTH was the "representative man" of the Lake poetry, pre-eminently and peculiarly the head of the school. Coleridge and Southey, and their followers, diverged into other tracks, and aspired to loftier strains; but he was faithful to the Helicon waters of Cumberland and the mountain Parnassus of Skiddaw. His perceptions and conceptions, his means, his manner, his method, his objects of study, and his modes of thought and expression, were most distinctly and individually his own. He looked earnestly at matters generally esteemed not worth notice, and he treated them as a philanthropist and philosopher. The former habit imparted an originality to his musings, and the latter enabled him to draw beneficial lessons from small things in nature, and even good out of evil, when conflicting anomalies or gross aberrations were presented to his views.

His pursuit of poetry, in this frame of mind and temper, led to his questioned talent at the offset, and his doubtful repute as he persevered in his course. They were the cause alike of his failures and successes. The weak and puerile sprung from their predominating infusion of the simple, just as the truly beautiful and poetic emanated from the genius they fostered. And thus it came to pass that one class of critics railed at what they deemed to be low and silly, whilst another class applauded to the skies what they maintained to be the noblest and most benevolent themes for the exercise of the heaven-born art. And both, to a certain degree, might be right: for it can hardly be denied that there is a strange incongruous mixture of the namby-pamby with the delightful, the ludicrous with the pathetic, and the affected with the natural in Wordsworth—that his poet eye never reached the sublime, or rolled in frenzy, but was chastened into a pervading sobriety of vision, which nevertheless included a magic sphere, sweetly adorned with grace, wisdom, and purity.

At all events he aimed to be natural, and, in the conviction that this was the true mission of the minstrel, defied or perhaps despised ridicule; and, whether abused or bepraised, held on undauntedly the even tenor of his way. The appeal was new, and consequently liable to great difference of opinion. What else could he expect who offered a theory for the regeneration of English poetry, and illustrated it by compositions of his own? Indeed, nothing could be more easy than to pick out, as taste or fancy dictated, passages like indifferent "nursery tales," or verses breathing the pure spirit of the immortal gift. It was a curious condition to be held up as a Zany with the cap and bells, on one side, and, on the other, to be elevated above the altar, and worshipped as an exalted genius; but so it was.

A minute observation of Nature, and a studied simplicity in applying language to the ideas suggested by her infinite variety, made the fountain of Wordsworth's verse. In his descriptions of the lowlier beauties he affected the tone of Touchstone towards Audrey, "homely, but mine own;" and never essayed to touch the strain (held to be complimentary to a painter, and also to a poet), that, if his peasant was spreading mapture, "he

scattered it with the air of a gentleman." And, when his theme rose into a higher sphere, it was not by figurative imagination, or words that burn, that he elaborated his design, but by the plainest possible prosaic realization of the matter it was his object to impress. His mirror reflected the naked truth, when unadorned adorned the most, and never distorted nor exaggerated, but attended by all the congenial attractions with which genius only knows how to illustrate the breathing world, and persuade and delight mankind.

His profession of poetic faith, the key to nine-tenths of his writing, may therefore be found in the short piece entitled "The Banks of the Wye," and serve as a text for all who discourse upon his literary or personal character. It runs thus:—

"This prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her: 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith that all which we behold
Is full of blessings."

It is but a terser song to bid—

"Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher,"

and amplify the same into the source of every virtue, pleasure, and happiness.

In personal appearance Wordsworth was a noticeable man; one of the few whom, having once seen, you remember as apart from the common herd. His life was mostly spent in rural retirement, amid the romantic scenery of the Lake district in Cumberland. I went once from Cheshire to visit him at Rydal Mount; I was not unexpected, nor denied the favour of a first home-picture. On walking up the beautiful greensward, on a fine summer afternoon, towards the house, I at once saw the poet seated, almost in attitude, at an open window which descended to the ground, and with a handsome folio poised upon his crossed knee, which he seemed to be reading. Had those been the days of photographs, the position would have been invaluable. He speedily left it, however, and gave me a kindly welcome to his very charming retreat, the apparent seat of "idlesse all," and "lettered ease."

It was here that the child was father to the man, and the man to the minstrel. From youth to age his devotedness to the *Ars Poetica* was so intense that it must have been pronounced most laborious, had it not been so calm, dreamy, and philosophical as to forbid the suspicion of any industrious application. It was not the fate of his authorship to toil through the calamities of

"Labour and Care, and Pain and dismal Age,
Till Hope deserted,"

and cast him a wreck upon the shoal of time; on the contrary, his path lay through pleasant places. He had enough for comfort, and a little more, when appointed distributor of stamps, and then laureate; and, morning, noon, and night, for years after years, he beguiled the hours in the same congenial way. He wandered, and he pondered, and he mused, and he indulged in the love of all the rural scenery around him, and the objects it offered to the appreciation of human sense; and, when satiated with the endless fancies upon outward things, he would retire within himself, and pile up thought on thought in the revision of his personal feelings throughout the long period of his contemplative exist-

ence. The former were gleaned from matters of fact—the latter were founded on experiences; and both were susceptible of ever-teeming fresh and novel views, as the temperament or the varying disposition of the passing moment might light them up for the scrutiny of the watchful and observant mind. This dreaminess, with few exceptions, dissolved into softness in one who "walked far from the world like a blissful creature," and "lived a whole life in absorbing thought"—

"As if life's business were a summer's mood."

In the country he would walk with you, talk with you, and seem gratified with your society; but, somehow or other, it seemed to me as if he were ready to relapse, become wrapt up in speculation, and would rather prefer being left to commune with himself. There must have been thousands of hours of these communings. It was during them that he had so much time to cultivate his elaborate simplicity, and descend to the trite and trifling subjects which he deemed consistent with that style, and believed he could elevate to the spirit, if not to the dignity, of song. It was this attempt which caused him to be accused of childishness, and induced the production of a certain kind of doggerel which no reputable periodical of the present day would accept.

You cannot, says the proverb, make a silk purse of a sow's ear, neither can you make a very small thing great. Even poetry cannot enlarge it by description, though it may possibly manage to elicit wonders from the materially insignificant, just as one might carve wonderful pictures on a cherry-stone. Yet we are not convinced by the apostrophe—

"Oh, gentle reader, you could find
A tale in every thing;"

at least I am of opinion that Wordsworth himself has failed in endeavouring to accomplish this task; and that in the attempt he often damages the beauties which stand in juxtaposition and alternate with these defects. Thus, his "Daisy" is at least but a blossom of prettiness—most of his reflections on similarly pretty objects being incongruous, though some are charming. As a whole, how inferior to the delicious lesson of Burns! In "We are Seven," indeed, the pathos overcomes the quaint familiarity of the style, and embodies the touching sentiment with irresistible effect; but the "Pet Lamb" is more artificial, and the "Leech Gatherer" rather contrasts than assimilates with, it by diving below water-mark and dabbling in the mud; fit enough for leeches, but which no power of poetry could transmute into a golden sand for admiration to flow on with Pactolus.

I could distinctly conceive Wordsworth and his choice of subjects—his imaginings and manner of treatment, when I witnessed the constant habits of his daily life. By day and by night he fed his soul with sights and emotions and analyses. He dwelt in no airy or fantastic world. He raised the temple of his fame on realities. The vicissitudes of atmospheric phenomena—thunder and calm, light and shade, drought and rain, heat and cold—the mountain peak, the undulating hills, and the extended champaign—the foaming torrent, the roaring cataract, the murmuring streamlet, and the ample mere; these, and truly Nature, in her every aspect, engrossed the devotedness of his ceaseless contemplation and study. And when he sought his themes from animate creation, it was the fate of his idiosyncrasy most readily to find, and most zealously to adopt, the Goody Blakes and Peter Bells, *et hoc genus omne*, for whom he had to adopt language suited to their stations, and yet not be inconsistent with the tone of refinement and polish which we seem to expect from the judicious muse.

How rarely he missed his aim or lost his way is marvellous, and how lavishly he bespangled even his beggar's rags with gems of unpriced value, so as to make them a nation's wealth and boast, is proven by his acknowledged triumph over all difficulties, and the lofty place he fills among the immortals in Britain's glorious poetic fane.

On his visits to town, the recluse of Rydal Mount was quite a different creature. To me it was demonstrated, by his conduct under every circumstance, that De Quincy, in some fit of resentment or unopiated ill-humour, had done him gross injustice in the character he loosely threw upon the public, viz., that "he was not generous or self-denying, but austere and unsocial, and would not burden himself with a lady's parasol or any civility of trouble;" and farther, that he was "slovenly and regardless in dress." I must protest that there was no warrant for this caricature; but, on the contrary, that it bore no feature of resemblance to the slight degree of eccentricity discoverable in Cumberland, and was utterly contradicted by the life in London. In the mixed society of the great Babylon, Mr. Wordsworth was facile and courteous; drest like a gentleman, and with his tall, commanding figure—no mean type of the superior order, well trained by education and accustomed to good manners—shall I reveal that he was often sportive, and could even go the length of strong (whatever invidiousness might say, not vulgar) expressions in the off-hand mirth of his observations and criticisms? I remember accompanying him one day to the Royal Academy Exhibition, wherein Turner had indulged his most defiant whim in colour by painting a Jessica looking out of her father Shylock's window. It was certainly an outrageous slap-dash of crude reds and yellows, lake, vermilion, gamboge, and ochre; harmonious it might be, as the great artist could blend it to be seen from a distance, but assuredly a strange spectacle to be closely examined. Will it be credited that, on looking at the unlovely Jessica, the poet laureate, so chaste and delicate in all his own paintings, should have repeated a simile, probably heedlessly caught from one of his low-lived studies, "She looks as if she had supped off underdone pork, and been unable to digest it in the morning." Oh! fie, for a laureate; but very unlike De Quincy's austere, unsocial misanthrope. I also recollect, among other minor traits, his enjoyment of the theatre when there were Kembles and others like them on the stage, and when, witnessing the vivid impersonation of a Brutus in "Julius Cæsar," or a Kent in "Lear," an audience felt as Wordsworth wrote—

"We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake."

Nor did he mislike the music of the opera; though the ballet afforded him matter for one of the most humorous critiques that could be imagined. He also was much solicited to write in the *Annals*, but, with the exception of a friendly intimacy with young Reynolds (the son of the dramatist, and author of an extraordinary volume, entitled "*Miserrimus*"), did not incline to be bribed into that service; nor, indeed, was he a money-seeker: for, on his way to a continental tour, after the incidents above related, he declined the offer of a considerable sum from the editor of the "*Literary Gazette*," which would have amply supplied the liberal expenditure on six weeks' travel and more, on the ground of an "idleness" of disposition, and that, being obliged to keep a diary, would cramp his movements and prevent his occupying his time as the spur of the moment might suggest. The wish for this diary, he it remarked, was inspired by the exhibition of the talent (so unlike the

poetic conception of the man) for original observation and ludicrous description, which I have endeavoured to point out as duplicate (or a second moiety) to the simple notions and intellectual refinements of the Poet of the Lakes. I dare affirm the world lost an instructive and amusing treat by his refusal.

Yet prose writing was not his forte, and his want of perspicuity has been judiciously ascribed to two causes—his admiration of Milton's prose, and his habit of dictating instead of writing. If he had been his own scribe, his eye would have told him where to stop; but in dictating, his own thoughts were familiarly intelligible to himself, and he ran on, unconscious of either the length of the sentence or of the difficulty an ordinary reader must necessarily meet in unravelling all its involutions, and following its meaning to the end. I have always found dictated composition to be complicated and diffuse. But we have more to do with his poetic career, to which we revert.

Born in 1770, during the last dozen years of the last century, he composed a great deal, including the "*Bor-derers*," a tragedy, "*Peter Bell*," and others of the watery class, which, however, were not published till in long after years. But, from beginning to end, his devotedness to the poetic art was manifested under an atmosphere so rich in incense and rejoicing, that it could only be esteemed an immeasurable pleasure, and hardly a labour, even of love! The quantity of his offerings at the shrine he worshipped was astonishing. *Nulla dies sine linea* would be a very defective estimate of his registry of meteoric appearances, infinitely more minute and searching than ever Admiral Fitzroy could boast—his more intense regard of innumerable features of rural nature than ever landscape-painting or topography or laud-surveying could embrace—his abundance of characters, not so striking as those of Crabbe—his tales, more picturesque than pointed—his placid thoughts, his humane sentiments, his beautiful passages, and his epithets, proclaiming the poet in simple words; as of the stone "fleece with moss;" the man remembered thirty years ago, who "was so old he seemed no older now;" or the deep calm of Westminster Bridge at sunrise, "glittering in the smokeless air:" when

"The very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still."

The inculcation of charity and morality, which pervades every page of Wordsworth, needs no comment or commendation; and I only allude to the latter virtue for the sake of picking out a trifling contrast to the beauties of the "*Waggoner*," and the still more admirable and affecting strain of the "*Old Cumberland Beggar*" (to my taste the most perfect composition of the author,) in the questionable tale of "*Harry Gill and Goody Blake*." The Goody, it may be remembered, is gripped by the farmer in the act of breaking down his fences (and not for the first time) for sticks to light her fire; and in her terror she prays that he may "never more be warm." And the curse falls upon him: his "teeth they chatter, chatter still;" which seemeth an admission contrary to the holy commandment, "Thou shalt not steal." The author appears to excuse the transgression, and say, "Let them steal," seeing that Farmer Gill is poetically punished for asserting his rights, and checking her evil deeds.

But Wordsworth was an upright, benevolent, and virtuous man, and justly enjoyed—

"That best portion of a good man's life,
His little nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love."

His sympathies were of the right order, and few human

beings ever passed through so long a term of life, who could say at the close they had given less offence or done less injury to their fellow-creatures. There is in this sketch no evil to live after him, nor can the good ever be interred with the bones of the poet, who has left so lasting a monument to show what he was, and preserve the exemplary memory thereof to generations yet unborn.

HOW I PASSED MY LAW EXAMINATION.

I AM an old lawyer now; but it seems but a few years since I went to London by the old stage-coach, to pass, or to attempt to pass, my examination for the purpose of becoming an attorney of Her Majesty's Court of Queen's Bench, etc., and a solicitor of the High Court of Chancery. I was rather unfortunate in not escaping the examination altogether, for the examinations had been only established two years before my term of articles expired; and I recollect how chagrined I was to find that I should really have to undergo the ordeal. Much had been said about establishing an examination by examiners; but I had hoped that I at least may get free from that. But alas! in the year 1836 was the examination of gentlemen to become attorneys introduced.

I ought, perhaps, for the information of the general reader, to remark that before the examinations by examiners were established, a gentleman, on the expiration of his articles, had only to go before one of the Judges with a certificate that he had duly completed his clerkship, who would perhaps ask him a jocosé question or two on some simple point of law, and then grant a fiat for his admission as an attorney, etc., as a matter of course, without further test of qualification. But to return to myself. I, of course, on the examination being established, had to read up, and "coach" myself to endeavour to pass. Well, the day of my examination, being the 24th day of January, 1838, arrived. Something like the following thoughts passed through my mind:—This is a day I have looked forward to with great anxiety—a day for which mentally I have laboured hard—a day for which I have studied early and late—a day which in all probability will determine my future sphere of life—a day which, upon reflection, will afford me great pleasure, or sink me into grief—a day the proceedings of which will inspire me with resolution, or discourage and dispirit me—a day of no small importance in my history; for though, if "plucked," I may try again and again, yet the disgrace of being plucked will so dishearten me that I shall not be able to look up again for a long time.

I go to the place of examination, being the hall of the Incorporated Law Society, in Chancery Lane, London, as doubtless many plucked candidates will recollect.

Now for self-possession, and strength of memory. There are about one hundred candidates at the entrance of the hall. The time is about half past 9 A.M. Anxiety is depicted in almost every countenance. To be sure there are a few apparently careless in their appearance and behaviour; but a good reader of human nature may detect some fear and anxiety beneath the careless exterior. Two porters stand at the door leading to the hall. The order is given to let the gentlemen in, three at a time; the three then seat themselves; and three more are admitted, who in turn seat themselves; and so on till all are admitted, and seated in the hall. There are three long tables reaching through the immense hall, covered with green baize, and six half-sheets of paper are placed for each candidate. I notice three large fires burning in the hall, and at the head sit the learned

examiners. Two or three officials I see walk up and down the hall, to see that the candidates derive no assistance from each other.

At 10 o'clock the printed questions are handed round. Few can suppress their curiosity to see what the questions are. However, I intend to suppress mine, and look only at one question at a time consecutively. As I go on writing out my answers, I am happy to see that some of the questions are on some nice points of law, which fortunately I had considered a few days before. I go on answering as well as I can, and answer about sixty out of the seventy-nine questions—I think correctly. The others are too hard for me, and are so framed as to cause great difficulty in answering; therefore I think I had better not attempt to answer them. I now take up my answers to the table of the examiners, and leave the hall about four o'clock P.M., being directed by the clerk to call to-morrow evening, when I should know the result of the examination, and whether I was "passed" or "plucked."

On Thursday the 25th January, 1838, (I recollect the date, I always shall,) various reflections entered my mind. I sat down to consider the answers I had given to some of the questions on which I was not quite fully satisfied, and was glad to find most to be correct. Then I thought—Suppose I should be plucked, what a mortification it will be to me. How can I return home with any comfort, and what will my friends think of me? But cheer up; I believe I shall pass; I have a certain conviction that all will be right.

At half past six P.M. I arrive at my place of trial, the aforesaid hall, go to the office of the secretary, almost afraid to ask him the question if I were passed. At length I told my name. He turned to the book in which was entered the names of all who had passed, and was to me an intolerable while looking through the names of the successful candidates, to see if my name was one of them. At length his finger stopped at a name, and then I saw all was right, and he said, "Yes, Mr. Smith, (that is not my name, but it will do here as well as any other,) you are passed." With what pleasing emotions of satisfaction did those few words fill my heart. He further told me to call to-morrow, and I should have my certificate of having passed. I thanked him and left. The old porter at the outer door, seeing the radiant and satisfied look on my countenance, must needs ask me if I had passed; but he did it with a very sly expression in his face, plainly showing that he knew full well a successful from an unsuccessful candidate. On informing him I had, he volunteers the information that there are many who have not passed.

Such is the history of my examination. I obtained my certificate in due course, and was duly sworn in; procured my admissions as an attorney and solicitor, and took out my first annual certificate to practise as such, which annual certificate I have taken out ever since, and for which every year I have had the pleasure of paying a stamp duty, varying from £8 to £6.

This is the description of an examination more than twenty years ago. Various alterations have since been made. The examinations are more strict. The final examination now occupies two days instead of one. And there are two more examinations besides the final examination, for the candidate for the legal profession, (or that branch of it exercising the functions of an attorney and solicitor,) to pass, namely, a preliminary examination in general knowledge before entering into articles of clerkship, and also an intermediate legal one when half the term (five years) has expired. So that I admit the candidate of the present day has treble as much to pass.

as the candidate of my day, as I tell my son, (who is being "coached" up for the preliminary examination,) as an inducement for him to work hard to be successful, that he may ultimately succeed to the practice consequent on the passing of "my examination."

A PHOTOGRAPHIC EXPEDITION IN BURMAH.

I.

On the 6th February, 1862, my Husband and myself left Thayet Myo, a small military station about five or six miles from the boundary of British Burmah, on a photographic expedition to the ruined city of Pagan, and to the modern city of Mandalay, the present capital of Burmah. We engaged for ourselves a low-roofed boat, which was to serve as our drawingroom by day, and, by the help of some temporary curtains, as our dressing and bedroom by night. The fore-part of the boat was occupied by our crew, which consisted of the master of the craft, a fine stalwart Burman, two assistant boatmen, and an old man and small boy, the two latter apparently shipped for ballast. Another boat followed with our servants, viz: A Mussulman Sepoy who acted as cook; a Burman lad, or loo-galay as he is termed, and a Chinaman who rejoiced in the name of Moses and the office of interpreter; and so, having introduced the reader to our motley crew, we leave him to peruse the journal.

6th February.—Left Thayet Myo at a quarter to nine, and were off Meeday by twelve. The scenery is very pretty, and the boats with their different crews give great life and animation to it. When the bank admitted it, the boatman towed us along. The *dolce far niente* proved a pleasant life after the worry of civilized life. If one were a "well-to-do" heathen, one might be tempted to adopt it for a change. The river bank above Meeday is very pretty, with such soft light colouring; now and then a large grey rock in the foreground, backed by a picturesque clump of trees, throwing long dark shadows over the pale yellow sand, and in the distance is the outline of the hills against the sky. About two P.M. a favourable breeze sprang up, and we hoisted sail. Passed the boundary line about three o'clock. We went on sailing and poling until nine in the evening, and must have come about twenty-five miles. We poled, towed, rowed, and sailed, and finally anchored about four miles below Loonghyee Island.

7th February.—Started rather late, about sunrise. Dressing was a difficult problem, as it was impossible to stand upright in our boat. Accomplished it in three motions, like the French *leçon de natation*. My toilet completed, I took down the *pardahs** and went outside. We sat on the prow and enjoyed the cool breeze until the boatmen pulled up for breakfast. At this place are two old ruined hollow pagodas—in one, the same pilaster and cornice work as seen in the Pagan remains. We found a well-made long broom, once, no doubt, used for sweeping the forsaken temple, and thinking it might be more useful on board, carried it off as lawful loot. A number of broken images, made of hollowed wood and gilded, were strewn among the ruins. The old man fell overboard this morning, and looks cleaner for his involuntary bath; as every Burman can swim like a fish, his accident alarmed no one but himself. Many curious water birds, king-fishers and a

peculiar kind of duck, abound here. There were several snakes swimming about in the water this morning, flashing in the sunlight, and reminding one of the Ancient Mariner and his irrespressible burst of admiration at their beauty. The view from Tounng Gyan was very pretty. A *khiong*,* and two or three pagodas on a tree-covered hill to our left, formed the foreground. Before us lay the river and the large island of Loonghyee, covered with thick trees. The hills stretched along the west bank, the dark shadows of the clouds ever varying their deep blue shades. We moored for the night at a little village where a *Poey*† shed was erected; but it must have been Moung Shwé‡ somebody's benefit on the previous night, and the company would not perform again for ours. Our day's journey must have been about twelve miles.

8th February.—The wind against us. We intended to try to reach the island of Khyien-dau, where Moses tells us are seven caves, seven *peiyas*,§ and seven tanks, some of which have been hidden and closed by bilous. The bilou is a kind of ogre, which plays no inconspicuous part in Burman mythology. Close to the bank where we stayed for breakfast was an immense net fastened to a canoe. It was raised out of the water, and kept steady by two immense bamboos. Our boatmen, in anticipation of landing at Khyien-dau, made grand coiffures. The method in which they pole the boat is by placing the end of the bamboo against the hollow of the neck, above the collar bone, and walking from the middle of the boat to the prow. The appearance of a large boat thus urged along against the stream is singular enough, very little imagination being required to convert the bronzed figures, with their black hair streaming over their shoulders, into fiendish forms, their wild yelling adding to the resemblance. A broad bank of sand prevented our landing at Khyien-dau: it looked too scorching both for head and feet to venture across it. We passed Tounng Wen by the east bank. This bank is strewn for some way with large grey stones, very like "bilou's bones," as the Burmans call fossil remains; but this form may have been caused by the action of the water. An old ruined *peiya* crowns the summit of the Tounng Wex Hill. The bright sandstone rock is very picturesque, dotted with trees, here and there a fallen trunk blanching among the stones. Passing the cliff, several pagodas were seen, one almost a ruin of bright red rock with four entrances; one or two were built on platforms. Here the channel of the river became very narrow. Above Khyien-dau the view is very lovely—the range of blue hills stretching far along, and the dark trees of the nearer landscape contrasting finely with the pale yellow sand-bank. A boat passed us having on board a *pyathat*, or tower, made of coloured paper and bamboo; it was ornamented with long red streamers. We stopped at the village of Mee Goung, where we went on shore, and I met with great attention from the ladies. One old woman seized my hand, and was delighted when I took off my glove. She patted me on the back, stroked me down, much after the manner in which one caresses a strange animal, and expressed such open admiration, that I was quite put to the blush, more especially when another lady, with the curiosity of her sex, having ascertained that my hands were white, wished to be permitted to see if my feet were of the same colour, and was evidently disappointed at not being allowed to inspect my

* A Burmese monastery.

† A *Poey* is the name of the Burmese play, an amusement of which the Burmans are passionately fond.

‡ Literally, "Mr. Golden," equivalent to Esquire.

§ Pagodas.

* Curtains.



THE EMBARKATION.

stockings. We visited a pagoda, not remarkable for beauty, however; it had somewhat the character of the remains at Meeaday. The parapet of a temple near the bank attracted our attention; it was formed of a long snaky dragon worked in chunam; but the approaching darkness prevented a close examination of it. On our return to the village we heard the women calling, "Come, come," and a group soon collected around me. I indulged them by taking off my hat, and they minutely examined me, some of them touching my hand, and feeling me, to see if I was really flesh and bones.

9th February.—Passed Melloon this morning. A large white pagoda crowns the highest point. There appear to be two wide flights of steps leading up to it, with the usual griffins. Many spires tower above thick groups of beautiful trees. There is a pretty view of the town from Patanahgoh, where we landed for breakfast. The only remains of Patanahgoh is a small peiya of solid masonry in ruins. The jungle immediately surrounding it had been burnt, and the difficulty of the ascent proved that crinoline is even less suited to savage than to civil life. The river takes an abrupt turn to the east at Melloon. We stopped at Menhlà, where Moses said it was necessary to get a pass; and accordingly he and Moung Bya, the loo-galay, were sent to fetch it. They came back without it, Moses saying that the Burmah "bo" (officer) said that he would consult four or five shahzadahs,

and they would consult and deliberate (durryast kurroh) upon it, as it was not an affair of small moment; we were to wait, and in a few hours we should be informed of the result of their deliberations. Not being at all inclined to spend our Sunday among the numerous boats thickly crowding the river's bank, the English "bo" went on shore, and found the Burman "bo" to be a Seetkay left in charge during the absence of the governor at court. He was very civil, and on being told the object of our visit to Paghan, he produced a pen and ink sketch of his wife, drawn by himself, and of which he was justly proud. He sent an official to examine our boats; but on our assurance that we had no contraband goods on board, he granted us the required pass (written with a style on a strip of palm leaf) at once. Menhlà seems a very busy place; quite a fleet of boats of all shapes and sizes were at anchor. One immense boat was adorned with two golden eyes at the prow. Some of the pennons were really pretty and tasteful. We reach Meen Gyaoung after some little trouble; for the boatmen had donned their best "bounng-gounngs" (turbands), and had made up their minds to stay at Menhlà, and of course they found the stream very strong against them afterwards. We climbed a very high bank to get on shore, where I was regularly mobbed. There is a pagoda of the obelisk shape here. It was altogether a fatiguing day—anything but one of rest.

10th February.—The river is very wide here, with large low islands. We made very little progress, having grounded on a sand-bank, where one of the boatmen, whom we named Moungh Shwé Wah, let fall his bamboo. In going back to recover it we slipped some way down stream, and lost so much time. A temporary village had been formed on the large island, where we anchored. The water was so strong that the men of both boats were obliged to join forces and tow our boat by a long rope from the top of the sand-bank, which in some places must have been from fifty to seventy feet in height. The water whirled by in eddies, with a force that made one shudder at the idea of a fall overboard. It would have been a fall into eternity; for no swimmer could have stemmed that tide. A nice pebbly beach followed, and we had a walk as the men pulled leisurely along after their hard work. A great quantity of fossil wood lay amongst the stones and broken rocks. We stopped at Yé-thee-ah, and were attracted by the sound of Burmese music to a khiong close by. Here we found crowds of people assembled, dressed in their best, and a great entertainment going forward. On inquiry, we learned that the body of a Ponghyee, or Buddhist priest, was lying in state on a bier in the monastery, and that the ceremony of burning was to take place in two days. The scene around the khiong was indeed a strange one. There were *piathats* and miniature pagodas and *tazoungs*,* etc., all covered with gilding and coloured paper, most tastefully made; some were ornamented with glass spangles; one was edged with white muslin, and the panels of these towers were painted with scenes from Burmese history and mythology. Bilous, náts,† and all kinds of grotesque creatures, were drawn with great spirit. The native artists had depicted Chinese and English too. One gentleman in red trousers and white coat, with a neckerchief tied in the *negligée* mode in which our countrymen are apt to indulge in hot climates, was directing the firing of a cannon. Another was drinking out of a soda-water bottle. One *piathat* was surmounted by a huge galoung,‡ made to move its wings. Another rested on the back of a white elephant; the animal was remarkably well made, and at its base was the figure of a Chinaman the size of life, and so life-like that Moses was quite annoyed; he protested that it was not a Chinaman, but a Shan; for it was tattooed. Moungh Bya, pointing to the little opium pouch suspended round the waist, established its nationality in a moment, to the great delight of the bystanders. Another pagoda was placed on the top of a black elephant. Some of these *peiya*s were literally hung from summit to base with offerings for the Ponghyees: umbrellas, thabeits,§ cups, basins, plates, *para-beikts*,|| spoons, fans, and betel boxes. One large pyramid was formed of English plates alone, slung in bamboo net-work. Figures of Tha-Gya-Ming, the king of the náts, beautifully made, surmounted some of the cars; white umbrellas were spread over them. Galoungs, bilous, náts, and *yathays*¶ were placed upon the roofs of an immense paper khiong, on which the Ponghyee was to be burnt; and these puppets were made to move backwards and forwards, much to the amusement of the crowd of sight-seers, who were, however, rather divided between the English *thékaif-ma* (lady) and the *tamasha***.

We saw a number of Shans, men and women, all travelling down the country, on pilgrimages to Prome

and to the Shwé Dagon at Rangoon. Some of the youths and women were nice-looking, and of very fair complexions, but the old men generally are hideous. The dogs show a peculiar enmity to us wherever we go, following us and barking furiously.

The Burmese are a queer people, full of fun and joke, but occasionally very angry for a few moments—very like children, and possessing many of their good qualities.

Close by the shore at Yé-thee-ah, a boat was in process of building, and the ship-wrights warping the stern part of the keel by means of a charcoal fire placed underneath, while the planks of the other end were fastened down by ropes and stakes. The total length of the boat was seventy-three feet and a half.

11th February.—Approaching Magwhé we came along the west bank, and the channel in some parts is very narrow, owing to the large sand islands. The west bank is very pretty—rather lower than it has been. It is dotted with pagodas for a long way. Magwhé is on the east bank. We met several boats with Ponghyees on board, all repairing, no doubt, to the scene of their brother's funeral. Very picturesque they looked in their brown and yellow robes; many of them were honoured with an umbrella, reverently held over their shaven crowns by a Shing.*

We reached Magwhé about 2 P.M., and went on shore about half a mile to some khiongs. There were three of these edifices within an inclosure, and a thein, or chapel for ordination (if it be allowable to use the term), of exquisite shape and carving, on the east side of the compound. The first khiong was a heavy monastic-looking building with three tiers of roofs and a *tazoung*†. The carving round the open verandah was in relief, and although rough, very effective. We were asked to go up into one of the khiongs, and no objection was made to my presence. The good monks' curiosity evidently overcame their scruples. They opened the shutter-like sides of the khiong, and admitted us into a large chamber, where at the east end was a recumbent figure of Gandama, dressed in his priestly robes and laid upon a couch. Kneeling before him was the figure of a monk, said to be his favourite disciple, Ananda. It appeared to be moulded of wax or clay, and the folds of the yellow robe were remarkably well executed. Before the couch on which the Bhudd lay were hung three green glass lamps of English manufacture. Reflectors of looking-glass, in the form of stars, were fastened to the large teak posts. In the hall were books and fans, and an *omnium gatherum* of things, such as plates, thabeits, *para-beikts*, etc.

The thein, which is a detached building close to the monastery, is built on three low tiers of masonry, each tier fenced in with stucco-work resembling poppy heads or fleur-de-lys. On some the sacred Henza was sculptured. The peaked roof is raised on massive teak posts, and the carving running along the edge of the roof is most delicate; it is of pierced work, representing flowers, scrolls, and birds in every attitude, pecking their wings, preening their feathers, sleeping, or with extended wings as if basking in the sun. The bosses are formed of bilous, or náts, one riding an elephant; another upon a kind of buffalo. At each corner of the thein is a griffin. Posts of petrified wood of considerable size—one measured about seventeen inches in diameter—were planted in the ground outside the thein. Ascending the build-

* A religious edifice so called. † A kind of fairy. ‡ A fabulous bird.

§ The dish in which the priest collects alms.

|| A black writing book.

¶ Hermits.

** An expressive Hindustani word for any kind of spectacle.

* The Shing is the Burmese novitiate, or pupil of the monks. During the period of their novitiate they conform to all the rules of the order; but they are under an obligation to enter the priesthood.

† A wooden structure of carved work, much like the fantastic pagoda on a "willow pattern" plate.

ing by a few broad steps we entered. The floor was of very white and highly polished chunam; at the east end was a small alabaster figure of Gaudama, placed upon a kind of moveable altar or stage of three tiers, covered with gold and red paint. A little shiing, who ran in after us, shikhoed* reverently, and looked scandalized at our omission of respect. Broad arches of carved wood extended from pillar to pillar. The Ponghyees said that the thein had been built about seventeen years; but it gave one the idea of much greater age. Leaving Magwhé we crossed the river to Memboo. The west bank is so thickly studded with pagodas that they are almost innumerable. One covered with gold, and backed by a large khioung of dark wood, is conspicuous above the rest. Henza poles—which are huge masts of teak wood, at the summit of which the sacred bird is sculptured—and the tall spires of the peiyas, impart a peculiar character to the landscape. The beautiful river, with its finely-wooded banks rising high at intervals, and each height crowned by the graceful pagoda, unfold a panorama of great beauty. Yet, now and then a view occurs, reminding one strongly of old England; it requires but little imagination to convert the solitary spire of a ruined pagoda, rising over the dark trees, into that of a village church, and the occasional sound of a deep-toned bell booming in the distance enhances the illusion. Near Memboo the country is comparatively flat, and the banks of the river low. As we passed by an island opposite the town we noticed a great number of chatties stained a greenish hue. Heaps of indigo stalks lay near, and women with long brushes of bamboo were pressing the dye from the stalks into the chatties.

SIR JOHN MOORE.

In the year 1808, when Napoleon sent his brother Joseph to be King of Spain, matters did not proceed so smoothly as had been expected. The Spaniards resisted the attempt to hand their nation over to the possession of a French intruder, and implored the assistance of England. They forced a large division of the French army in Spain to capitulate, and broke the terms of the agreement. The English sent armies to Spain and Portugal, cleared the latter country of the French, and invaded the north of Spain. In these circumstances, the mighty master judged his own presence to be necessary. From his armies, which were scattered over Europe from Italy to the Baltic, he drew the Imperial Guards, the veterans of Austerlitz, Jena, and Friedland, and marched them in one collected corps into Spain. Besides, a host of superb cavalry and a number more of gallant infantry, followed through the western Pyrenees. While his troops were proceeding to the frontiers of Spain, he himself hastened to meet the Emperor Alexander at Erfurth. There, amidst scenes of gaiety and the relaxations of friendship, a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, was signed, by which Alexander was allowed to take his own way in the East of Europe, while he gave up the fate of Spain to the will of his Imperial brother. After the conferences at Erfurth, Napoleon repaired to Bayonne, where he arrived on the 3rd of November. Accompanied by Soult and Lasnes, he quitted it on the morning of the 8th, and reached Vittoria in the evening. He was met by the civil and military chiefs at the gates of the town; but, refusing to

go to the house prepared for his reception, he jumped off his horse, entered the first small inn he saw, called for his maps, and in two hours arranged the plan of his campaign, exclaiming with conscious power, "Voilà l'esprit de la guerre d'Espagne"—There is the spirit of the war in Spain. Having issued his instructions, the vast mass of his troops was put in motion with his accustomed celerity and skill. Soult instantly set out for Briviesca, where he arrived at daybreak on the 9th, and received the second corps from Bessieres; and early on the morning of the 10th, at Gamonal, almost instantaneously defeated a large Spanish army containing the best troops in Spain, comprising the Walloon and Spanish Guards, the Royal Carabineers, and some volunteers of good families. They numbered 11,000 infantry and 1100 cavalry; thirty pieces of artillery covered the front, and 7000 armed peasants were on the heights behind the regular troops. Victors and vanquished rushed into Burgos together. All the Spanish stores were captured in Burgos; and Soult, still riding the post horse he had mounted at Briviesca, pursued his victory. He rested a few days at Espinosa; but Victor came up, and drove away Blake's army in terrible confusion. These two battles, and the subsequent operations, laid the north of Spain prostrate from St. Sebastian to the frontiers of the Asturias. Without pursuing farther the detail of the French conquests, we just mention that Madrid capitulated to Napoleon on the 4th of December, and he took up his residence at Chamartin, about six miles distant from the capital.

On the 6th of October a plan of the campaign from England reached Lisbon; 30,000 infantry and 5000 cavalry were to be employed in the north of Spain; of these, 10,000 were to be embarked at the English ports, and the remainder were to be composed of regiments drafted from the army then in Portugal. Sir John Moore was appointed to command the whole. His task was an arduous one; his troops were but raw soldiers, and the commissariat and other parts of the administration, civil and military, were zealous but inexperienced. Knowing the value of time in military transactions, he urged forward the preparations with all possible activity. He was very desirous that troops who had a journey of six hundred miles to make previous to meeting an enemy, should not be exposed to the torrents of rain, which in Portugal descend at this period with such violence as to destroy the shoes, ammunition, and accoutrements of the soldier, and render him almost unfit for service. With such energy did the general overcome all obstacles, that the whole of the troops were in motion, and the headquarters quitted Lisbon by the 26th of October, just twenty days after the despatch had reached him appointing him to the chief command. In the meantime, Sir David Baird's forces arrived at Corunna. Lord William Bentinck had given intimation of their approach, and the Central Junta had repeatedly assured him that every necessary order was given, and that every facility would be afforded for the disembarkation of the troops. All this was untrue, and the English soldiers were detained seventeen days on board of their transports. Without detailing the troubles experienced by the three British divisions under Moore, Baird, and Hope, we hasten to state that the head of the British columns entered Salamanca on the 13th of November.

Sir John Moore at Salamanca, was fully aware of the perilous position of the English army when Napoleon entered Spain. The following letter, addressed by him to Lady Hester Stanhope, possesses a melancholy interest. It appears in the recently published *Miscellanies* edited by Earl Stanhope.

* To "shikho" is to worship by prostration, or inclination of the body, with joined hands raised to the forehead.

"Salamanca, November 23, 1808.

"I received some time ago your letter of the 24th October. I shall be very glad to receive James, if he wishes to come to me, as an extra aide-de-camp, though I have already too many, and am obliged, or shall be, to take a young Fitzclarence. But I have a sincere regard for James, and besides, can refuse you nothing but to follow your advice. He must get the Commander-in-Chief's leave to come to Spain. He will, however, come too late; I shall be already beaten. I am within four marches of the French, with only a third of my force; and as the Spaniards have been dispersed in all quarters, my juncture with the other two thirds is very precarious; and when we all join, we shall be very inferior to the enemy. The Spanish Government is weak and imbecile; their armies have at no time been numerous; and the country is not armed, nor, as far as I can judge, enthusiastic. We have been completely deceived by the contemptible fellows chosen as correspondents to the armies; and now the discovery comes a little too late. Charles is not yet arrived; his was one of the best regiments that left Lisbon, and was not intended to join us, if I, in compassion to his melancholy countenance, had not found a pretext. We are in a scrape; but I hope we shall have spirit to get out of it. You must be prepared, however, to hear very bad news; the troops are in as good spirits as if things were better; their appearance and good conduct surprise the green Spaniards, who had never before seen any but their own or French soldiers.

"Farewell, my dear Lady Hester. If I can extricate myself and those with me from our present difficulties, and if I can beat the French, I shall return to you with satisfaction; but if not, it will be better for me that I should never quit Spain.

"I remain always, very faithfully and sincerely yours,

"JOHN MOORE."

Moore judged the French Emperor more anxious to strike a blow against the English than to overrun any particular province, or to take any town in the Peninsula. He resolved, therefore, to throw himself upon the communications of the French army. Moore knew well that the great commander would most likely fall with his whole force upon those who menaced his line of communication; but to relieve Spain at a critical moment, and give time for the south to organize its defence and recover courage, he was willing to draw the enemy's whole power upon himself. On the 11th of December a forward movement was commenced; but preparations for a retreat on Portugal were also continued. Napoleon, on his side, was sensible that the English army was the most formidable obstacle he had in Spain, and he was very desirous to drive it out of his way.

Napoleon entered Astorga on the 1st of January, 1809. 70,000 French infantry, 10,000 cavalry, and 200 pieces of artillery were there united. But he had received intelligence that Austria had declared war, and that his presence was more necessary elsewhere. He therefore departed from Astorga to Valladolid, ordered the Imperial Guard to return to France, and himself departing on horseback with scarcely any escort, performed the journey to Paris with astonishing speed, leaving to Soult the charge of "driving the English into the sea."

Moore was convinced that however good his troops might be, even against superior numbers, it was a hopeless task for 19,000 to contend with an enemy who had 300,000 men in Spain; therefore, a quick retreat to reach his ships unmolested was the utmost he could desire or hope. The direction of his march was in some degree

dependent on the report of his engineers as to which port was the fittest for embarkation. On the 5th of January he received a report as to the unfitness of Vigo, and therefore he changed his line of retreat, and directed his march upon Corunna. Orders to this effect were sent ahead to Sir David Baird, who forwarded them by the hands of a private dragoon to General Fraser, who had already proceeded for some distance on the road to Vigo. The man got drunk, and lost the despatches for Fraser, which untoward incident cost many lives, and was the cause of much delay. The original despatches sent to the admiral at Vigo never came to hand. At length, on the 9th of January, a memorandum from the commander-in-chief, written on a drum-head, apparently in the rain, but clear, soldier-like, and to the purpose, was put into Sir Samuel Hood's hands by an officer, half dead with fatigue and anxiety, who had found his way on horseback from the British head-quarters to Vigo, across the wild mountains of Galicia. The wind blew in dead from the south, and so hard, that not one of the transports could be moved. The brief despatch from the army was scarcely half read through, when a signal was made from the "Barfleur," and in less than half an hour the men-of-war were under sail. When once round the point, the wind being fair to Corunna, away they spanked with a flowing sheet, to tell that we (says Basil Hall, then in the "Endymion") were coming after them as fast as we could, with our flock of three hundred transports.

The English, after much skirmishing and fatigue, reached Corunna on the 11th. As the troops approached the place, the general's looks were earnestly directed towards the harbour, but he saw nothing but the open expanse of water; not a single ship had made its appearance. It was a grievous thought that the last consuming exertion made by the weary troops was thus rendered fruitless. The men were put into quarters, and their leaders awaited the progress of events. Three divisions occupied the town and suburbs of Corunna. On the 14th of January many of the faster sailing vessels of the convoy had entered the harbour of Corunna, where the squadron of men-of-war, under Sir Samuel Hood, had already arrived. The dismounted cavalry, the sick, some of the horses, and fifty-two pieces of artillery were embarked during the night. On the morning of the 15th the "Endymion" arrived, surrounded by upwards of two hundred and fifty sail of ships. The French began to arrive, and Moore sought a position for battle. He was obliged to occupy a ridge, inclosed as it were within another ridge, which commanded it within cannon shot. In the night, Soult with great difficulty dragged eleven heavy guns to the rocks, which formed the left of his line, within 1200 yards of the British right. Midway, the little village of Elvina was held by the pickets of the 50th British regiment. The late arrival of the transports, the increasing force of the enemy, and the disadvantageous nature of the position, so much augmented the difficulty of embarking, that some generals now advised a negotiation for leave to regain the ships. There was little probability that this would be granted; and Moore would not consent to a proposal which would cast a shade on the prudence and energy of his retreat. His high spirit and clear judgment revolted at the idea, and he rejected the degrading advice without hesitation.

All the encumbrances being shipped on the morning of the 16th, it was intended to embark the fighting men in the coming night; but about two o'clock in the afternoon a general movement of the French gave notice of an approaching battle, and the British infantry, 14,500

strong, occupied their position. Military historians have described the arrangements of both armies with professional accuracy; but perhaps common readers will have a more lively conception of this celebrated engagement if we lay before them a few notes from Basil Hall, who had come from Vigo with the ships, and whose captain kindly allowed him a day on shore, in company with the purser, and thus gave him an opportunity seldom attained by a sailor, to be in the thick of a land battle. "There was none of the show and flourish of a review to be seen here; for the soldiers lay about wearied and dispirited, ragged in their dress, and many of them sickly, or rather broken down in appearance, by the fatigues of this celebrated retreat. Unshaven for many a day, their skins blackened with gunpowder and the charcoal smoke of their bivouac fires, there was no flourishing review trim here. Their muskets were piled in pyramids amongst the men, who were fast asleep. Many, however, were sitting on the grass, or on the loose blocks of granite which were about the ground, looking with wistful eyes towards the ships. Along the whole line of troops I observed only one or two of the officers asleep. Generally speaking, they were collected in little knots, looking about them, but seldom speaking. We threaded our way among the sleeping soldiers, piled muskets, and camp equipage, along the whole line. We came to the well known Rifle corps, the 95th, and I was happy to find an old friend alive and merry, among the officers of this regiment. On asking the officers what chance there was of our seeing a battle, they shrugged their shoulders, and said they had already had quite enough of that work. They therefore had but one wish, to get snugly on board the ships, and get off from such a rascally country, and such useless allies as the Spaniards. I had but just asked the commanding officer of one of the regiments whether he thought anything would possibly rouse the men up. "You'll see by and by, sir, if the French there choose to come over." These words were hardly uttered when a movement along the whole enemy's line became apparent even to our inexperienced eyes. A furious cannonading was opened from a battery mounting eleven guns. At the first discharge from the French battery, the whole body of the British troops, from one end of the line to the other, started on their feet, snatched up their arms, and formed themselves with as much regularity and apparent coolness as if they had been exercising in Hyde Park. Formerly silence reigned over the field; now there was a loud hum, occasionally a shout, and the peculiar sharp click-click of fixing bayonets. Not a single face was now turned towards the ships: all was animation and cheerfulness, over minds from which, but a short time before, it seemed as if every particle of spirit had fled. In a few minutes the army was perfectly ready to meet the enemy, who came rapidly down the side of the opposite heights, in three immense columns, black and formidable. When these huge columns had reached the level space, less than a mile in width, lying between the bases of the two ranges of hills, the English guns were turned upon them with great effect. It could hardly be called a plain, for it was crossed in all directions by roads cut into the earth like deep trenches, while on the ground above there was spread a complete network of walls, hedges, and rows of trees, of such intricacy that it was very nearly impossible to form fifty men abreast anywhere. Each cornfield or little patch of garden ground became the scene of a separate fight; the severest fighting was at the village of Elvina, which we could easily distinguish was sometimes in the possession of one party, sometimes of the other. We observed Sir David Baird led off the field. Shortly afterwards,

another and a larger group passed, bearing along a wounded officer. We were trying to discover who it could possibly be that engaged so much attention, when an officer rode up the hill. After he had delivered his message, he pointed to the party which had just gone by, and told us, that in the centre was carried along their brave Commander-in-Chief, who, a few minutes before, had been struck off his horse by a cannon shot."

It was when he was earnestly watching the result of the fight about the village of Elvina, that Sir John Moore was struck on the left breast by a cannon shot; the shock threw him from his horse with violence; yet he rose again in a sitting posture, his countenance unchanged, and his steadfast eye still fixed upon the regiments engaged in his front, no sigh betraying a sensation of pain. In a few moments, when he saw the troops were gaining ground, his countenance brightened, and he suffered himself to be taken to the rear. Then was seen the dreadful nature of his hurt. The shoulder was shattered to pieces, the arm hanging by a piece of skin, the ribs over the heart broken and bared of flesh, the muscles of the breast torn into long stripes and interlaced. As the soldiers placed him in a blanket, his sword got entangled, and the hilt entered the wound. Captain Hardinge, afterwards Lord Hardinge, attempted to take it off, but he stopped him, saying, "It is as well as it is. I had rather it should go out of the field with me." Several times he caused his attendants to stop, and turn round that he might behold the field of battle; and when the firing indicated the advance of the British, he discovered his satisfaction, and permitted the bearers to proceed. When brought to his lodging in the town, the surgeons examined his wound: there was no hope; the pain increased; he spoke with difficulty. At intervals he asked if the French were beaten, and addressing his old friend Colonel Anderson, said, "You know I always wished to die this way." Again he asked if the enemy were defeated; and being told they were, said, "It is a great satisfaction to me to know that we have beaten the French." His countenance continued firm: only once, when he spoke of his mother, he became agitated; he often inquired after the safety of his friends and the officers of his staff, and even at that moment did not forget to recommend those whose merit had given them claims to promotion. Among others he mentioned General Graham, afterwards Lord Lynedoch, the hero of Barrosa. "Remember Graham." When life was fast ebbing, he exclaimed, "I hope the people of England will be satisfied: I hope my country will do me justice." In a few minutes afterwards he died, and his corpse, wrapped in a military cloak, was interred by the officers of his staff in the citadel of Corunna. Soult, with a noble feeling of respect for his valour, raised a monument to his memory on the field of battle.

At the time of his death, many were angry and disappointed at the late events, and in England, parties ran high. He was, therefore, long of getting the justice which in his dying moments he desired. But it came at last. His political and military combinations were both approved of. His conduct was praised by Soult and Wellington; and Napoleon more than once affirmed, that if he committed a few trifling errors, they were to be attributed to his peculiar situation; and that his talents and firmness alone had saved the English army from destruction.

Notwithstanding the great disaster of the loss of their general, the troops gained ground. When night set in, their line was considerably advanced, while the French were falling back in confusion. Their disorder facilitated the original plan of embarking during the night; and

the arrangements were so complete that neither confusion nor difficulty occurred.

The harassed soldiers bore their many hardships with admirable cheerfulness. Each man knew his duty, and, in the true spirit of discipline, wished to perform it; and the whole body marched from the field to the boats, almost with the regularity of a corporal's guard going its rounds. The embarkation of the troops was not entirely finished when the day broke on the morning of the 17th of January. The French cavalry were pushed forward, at the first peep of dawn, to ascertain what was the situation of affairs. They had the mortification to see the last of the retiring pickets crowding into the gates of Corunna, under cover of the guns of the fort, which were manned partly by the rear-guard of the British army, and partly by the Spaniards—a fact which deserves honourable mention, as it is almost the only instance in which the English had been seconded by the people they came to assist.

The fleet steered home directly from Corunna, and a terrible storm scattered it. The writer of this paper shared a portion of the annoyances occasioned by the gale, being on board an Indiaman, part of a noble fleet which had left Portsmouth a few days before, and was completely dispersed by the storm which assailed the ships from Corunna. We found ourselves tossed by the same tempest; and being damaged by the carrying away of our main-top mast, we communicated with a majestic ship of the royal navy, which rode on the tossing waves, apparently with little inconvenience. We learned afterwards that it was the "Ville de Paris," of 110 guns, having on board Sir David Baird, with an arm amputated. We got into Portsmouth mingled with the transports; and saw many of the officers and men who had gone through this perilous campaign, and heard them, under the cheerful blaze of an English fire, talk of the hardships and adventures which had befallen them.

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE.

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning;
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we stedfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollowed his narrow bed,
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,—
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done,
When the clock struck the hour for retiring;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone—
But we left him alone with his glory.

REV. C. WOLFE.

RAMBLES OF AN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL INSPECTOR.

I.—THE INSPECTOR LOST IN THE BUSH.

How different is the life led by a school inspector in England, from that endured by his brother in the bush of Australia! Luxuriously carried along in the first-class compartment of a train, the English inspector travels one hundred miles without fatigue or discomfort. He arrives at the school-door without being drenched by rain, smothered with dust, daubed by mud, or tattered in dress from a thorny thicket.

The first time I saw an English inspector in a classroom, I could not help mentally contrasting his prim condition with the disordered appearance in which I have had to present myself before the scholars. One occasion I remember, when, having ridden several hours in the teeth of a hot wind, I arrived with an aboriginal face, from dust and perspiration. I demanded water to quench my thirst and unseal my eyelids, and was comforted by the assurance of the teacher—"I am so sorry, sir, but every drop is gone: I will send to the hole and get some, it is not above a mile off."

The English inspector has not to walk, as I have had to do, all night through a burning forest, to avoid the heat of day, as one horse had failed, and another could not be obtained but at the next house, nearly twenty miles off. He has not to toil along a road, *so called*, with mud up to the saddle-girths. He is not obliged to swim flooded rivers, ford dangerous creeks, cross broad morasses, scratch through prickly scrubs, enter pathless forests, pant on treeless plains, endure long hours of thirst and hunger, and sleep on the turf when lost in the bush. An adventure of the last sort may be described.

Resisting the kind appeal of a settler's lady, who tried to induce me to stay all night at her hospitable home, as the sun was lowering fast for a forest ride, I leaped on my horse, persuaded that a few hours would bring me nearer my next school, and secure me quarters as well. So many tracks ran off in various directions, and were undistinguishable from cattle trails, that I dashed off at once into the gloomy shade, dependent upon my compass alone. I had taken bearings from one old volcano, near which I had dined, for another near which I expected to find a settler's homestead; for, without introduction, I intended, in due colonial course, to throw myself as a stranger upon that gentleman's hospitality.

Now and then I caught sight of the crater top toward which I was hastening, and got fresh compass guidance. But, as the shadows deepened I lost all objects but trees and grass. Coming on to vast blocks of lava, rolled about, I knew that I was at the foot of the hill, though not so well aware then, that it was above twenty miles round. Coming upon a well-beaten track, as the evening fell rather suddenly upon me, my horse pushed ahead with the thought of his supper. But he soon stopped; for he came to what is well known as a *glue-pot* marsh, that is, where the mud has a very strong adhesive quality. It was a toilsome work to drag through this. Firm ground appeared. On again in the darkness. The trees ceased all at once, and the track ceased also. I stood at the side of another green marsh, and in vain sought to look across for an object. The mist aided night in concealment. I was lost!

It is never an agreeable sensation to miss one's way in such solitudes. Without apprehension of wild beasts, without fear of marauders, without dread of natives, it is not pleasant to lie down alone in the forest at night. But when one has no matches for a fire, no provision

for a supper, and no blanket for a wrapper, the "situation" is indeed cheerless.

My first thought was to retreat from the damp valley, and get back into the timber. Suddenly a fire blazed up before me, and Tom trotted off without bidding toward it. There I found a man camping for the night near a cattle yard. He extended toward me the remnants of his supper—a small piece of meat, two potatoes, and a pannikin of tea. He was sorry he had eaten all the bread, was very glad of my company, and was quite ready to give me a part of his blanket when I wanted to turn in. As I knew a bush coverlid was never too clean, and was often a perfect museum of entomology, I returned my thanks, but declined his extreme hospitality.

It ought to be mentioned that, as a true traveller, I looked to my beast before myself. My benighted friend had noticed a tether rope fastened to one of the trees near the cattle yard. This was quite a good fortune for poor Tom, as it enabled him to have a graze without being lost to himself and his master.

My companion was an Irishman; but his tongue was not from the lively isle. An interrogative series, however, brought out something from him. He had been out with Leichhardt, the ill-fated Australian explorer, and he warmed up as he narrated some of his perilous adventures on the route to Port Essington. He could not live in towns now, he told me. Nothing suited him but the bush. As a shepherd, he was on his way to another station, when night overtook him. He said he would rather sleep quietly in the forest, beside a good fire, than lie on a bed in a house. He soon left my company for that in his blanket.

A drizzling rain then drove me under shelter of a little shed, over the tackling used for hauling up unruly beasts. No seat presenting itself but the top of the high fence, or the rolling axle to which the tackling was fastened, I preferred to gather myself upon the shifting axle. My efforts to sleep were unsuccessful. I repeatedly went over the multiplication table, and nearly told the numbers of the national debt; but all in vain. Now a wild dog would howl, then a bullock would bellow, the night bird would shriek, and an exhausted log would fall into the ashes. Old Tom persisted in an attempt to strangle himself, or dance in tight ropes, and had my assistance again and again to extricate him. Then, when his jaws ached with feeding, and he subsided into repose, a sudden vulgar snore awoke him to propriety and disturbed my nod. Yielding to the force of circumstances, I descended from my instrument of torture, replenished the fire, gathered up an amazing stock of fortitude and resignation, and looked up to the stars, which now, freed from the cloudy drapery, blushed forth their loveliness before me.

Hour after hour did I watch the noiseless progress of the constellations. The Southern Cross, always above the horizon, was at first erect,* as Constantine may have seen his sign in the heavens—the cross triumphant. It almost saddened me to see it sink downward toward the earth, as though attracted by its smiles, in forgetfulness

of loftier destinies. But it was a comfort to know that though here it sank a little, there were other climes in which it towered aloft in all its symbolic grandeur; and faith whispered patience for awhile, and I should know it here again triumphant. After all, its decline was but an optical illusion. The cross itself was not abased; it was but the revolution of this earth. It never can be lowered, nor can it cease to shine. The admiring eye of man may see it brighter still upon another shore.

Our Southern Cross is an enduring charm. There it stands with its foot upon that mysterious blackened void, that pear-shaped space of darkness which looms forth as a forbidding spectre, amidst the glowing beauties of the galaxy. Fancy pictured a stray spirit, lost in that orbless space, being directed homeward by the brilliance of the starry lighthouse on the borders of that dark ocean. It would not be the only soul guided homeward amidst the gloom of nature by the rays of the Cross.

But the fire burnt low; my enthusiasm cooled down; a raw fog came stealing along the marsh, lazily climbing up the branches, driving me to the shed, and making me coil once more upon the axle. I shivered, and forgot my dreams of fancy; I longed for the morn.

Fairly wearing out at last, I sank into an unsteady doze. From this partial loss of myself I was awakened by the rude chattering of an early magpie. Dropping down from my perch, chilled and stiffened by my constrained posture, I looked round the grey scene of twilight, saddled my horse, and rode leisurely away. After hours of painful suspense spent in winding round the volcano, the geological interest of which was quite unheeded by me then, I reached the house, and got a breakfast.

Such a night in the bush does not furnish the best preparation for an inspector's work on the following day, and is far too uncomfortable to be romantic or interesting.

THE SHEPHERD'S BOYS AT THE GRAMPPIANS.

Another time I was lost in the forest that girdles the Mount William range of the Grampians of Victoria.

Hours had passed without the sight of a human being, or the presence of any token of civilization. Undulations of palæozoic rocks, with occasional granite intrusions, formed the only variety in my bush ramble. Troops of hopping kangaroos ventured to cross my path, and the screaming of flocks of parrots mingled with the merry note of the laughing jackass.

But the rosy tint on the lofty rocks of William melted into ashy gloom, and the harsh howl of the dingo from the depths of the scrub told me that the marauder's time of darkness was coming. The demand for supper was as urgent as the call for rest, and I coo-ed again and again to attract the ear of man. It was then with most pleasurable emotions that I caught at last the sound of a European dog. It was evidently the bark at a flock, and I knew a shepherd was not far off. Hastening forward, I gained the evening camp of the bleaters, and was soon comfortably seated by the hut fire of the bushman—the only abode for miles about in these solitudes. The edifice was not attractive for appearances, nor convenient for use. It was about eleven feet long by eight feet broad. The elevation, even to the ridge of the roof, was but eight feet, and the sides were much less. The structure was of logs and mud, with a roof of bark, whose antiquity was evidenced in its rolled-up condition, admitting liberal entrance to sun, air, and rain. A sort of dog-kennel attachment outside, with

* In the latitude of Victoria, and thence southward, the Southern Cross is within the circle of constant appearance, like the Great Bear in the northern hemisphere. It is about thirty degrees from the South Pole. It is seen through its whole revolution, and, consequently, in every variety of position. The two stars which mark the foot and summit are the pointers to the pole, and having nearly the same right ascension, the Cross is almost perpendicular at the moment when it passes the meridian. As it rises it inclines to the eastward, and as it sets leans over to the westward. "Midnight is past, the Cross begins to bend." This heavenly star-clock of the southern sky is familiar to European readers through the popular tale of "Paul and Virginia." It never fails to arrest all voyagers and emigrants.

admission from the hut, formed the bedchamber of the family of the shepherd.

My reception was a hearty one. Hospitality is the great virtue of the bush: it is offered freely, and accepted without shame or hesitancy. No apology is attempted for the nature of the viands or the shabbiness of the couch. The food is wholesome and plentiful, though the cookery is innocent of the inventions of Soyer, and unaccompanied with Harvey or Worcester sauce. The bed is more often an impromptu one than an English four-poster; a stretcher is a luxury. I have had sometimes to pick out the softest plank on the floor, and recline thereon, with a blanket or rug around me.

In the present instance my supper was the ever-present damper and tea. The good dame kindly promised me a stretcher. Where she should place it in a room half taken up by her own uncurtained bed, was a question not reserved for travellers to entertain.

An hour or so of the evening passed in a chat with the boys of the household. One was about ten and the other eight. I got their story. They came from the land of the mountain and flood, Old Scotia. They had been four or five years in Australia. Most of that time they had been at the diggings, and now were camped upon this out-of-the-way sheep station. I was amused with their vivacity and frankness, and assured of their mental acuteness.

We turned then to their employments; and they eagerly described their bush life. They got the hurdles together for the night camp of the sheep. They took a run with the dog after kangaroo rats. They shouldered the gun for parrots, hawks, and eagles; for the latter had a fancy for the lambs. They went off opossuming at night, snared the wild dog, and shot down the wombat, or native pig. Then they got fish in the King William Creek, and occasionally made soup from kangaroo's tail. Merry lads in the bush were they, nor knew they anything of the *ennui* of solitude.

Then came up the school talk. "Can you read, my lads?" "We can so," was the thoroughly colonial response. I inquired into the stock of literature—there was a Gaelic Bible and a Gaelic Psalm-book. But they could not read Gaelic, though father and mother could. All the records in English print were two Testaments, which they got somehow from a diggings school they had attended. The mother, with a brightened eye, informed me that she was the teacher now, and had the boys to read a chapter to her every night.

With this encouraging opening we took our reading lesson. The fingers were constantly used as aids to eyes, after the juvenile fashion. I quietly expressed my concern that their sight should be so bad for print, and so good for hunting. The road seemed smooth enough with easy monosyllables, but became difficult with the advent of five or six-lettered words, and almost impassable with a simple dissyllable. As they confessed that the writing had nearly gone for want of exercise, and the multiplication had gradually receded from their vision in the distance, I had to content myself with a few specimens of the interrogative upon the verses they had attempted to read.

But here my lads were fairly bothered. They could have given me luminous chapters upon natural history, and discoursed learnedly upon mining; but to explain what was in the Testament was utterly beside the mark. In fact, they seemed little aborigines, idealess upon religious subjects. They knew nothing of the meaning of such words as *salvation*, *ransom*, *eternity*. The Fall they did not comprehend, and the Saviour's Passion

was unknown to these descendants of Knox and Erskine.

"What is your soul?" said I.

"Don't know," replied one of them.

"Is there anything of you that can never die?"

This seemed to puzzle them awhile; then one muttered—

"Never heard of it."

My next endeavour was to learn their apprehension of the duty of prayer. They evidently did not understand my question. I put it in various ways before eliciting an answer. No; they had never asked God to forgive them for anything. No; they never asked him to take them to heaven. They never asked him for anything. They knew not what was implied by saying prayers at night. They never prayed.

I turned to the father, whose roughly-bearded face was glowing with ill-suppressed confusion and shame. The poor mother hung down her head in silence.

"Yes," answered the man, to my look; "the lads are right, sir. I am glad they didn't tell a lie, sir. They don't say their prayers, sir. When they were at the diggings I was too busy to take them to church, and it was a long way off, to be sure. But when we were in Scotland, sir, it was not so; we all went to church then. Even the boys, though little and young, were taught their prayers, and always said them to me every night."

This intelligence at first a little confounded me.

"But," said I, "they don't seem to know now that they ever learned their prayers."

The shepherd shuffled about on his log seat, and at last came out with the following apology:—"Why, do you see, sir, this is it. The lads were taught their prayers; but that was in Gaelic, which we all talked in our place pretty much. When they came out to Australia, where English only is spoken, they forgot their Gaelic and their prayers too."

This very conclusive statement satisfied me why they did not say their prayers in Gaelic, but gave no light as to their ignorance of an English supplication.

I turned again to the lads. After giving them a sort of general lesson, and trying by kindly tone and simple speech to lead them to think of a forgotten lesson, I taught them a prayer. Dividing it into five short sentences, and giving each one of the passages an association with one of the five fingers, the lesson was easily acquired.

When alone with the seniors, I deemed it a duty to talk very plainly to them. It was cruel to neglect the education of such fine sharp lads. It was more cruel still to leave them in ignorance of their God. It was especially a shame for them as Scotch people.

Suspecting from the first the real reason of this parental negligence—their forgetfulness of prayer, their omission of church duties, their ill luck at the diggings, and the present aspect of poverty in the hut, I put the question boldly—whether or not *strong drink* had anything to do with his misfortunes and faults. It was so. He admitted that the evil habit contracted in Scotland had been encouraged by early success at the diggings, and that he had been induced to withdraw to the solitude of the bush to escape temptation.

He seemed touched by my counsel, and devoutly promised no longer to neglect the dear lads. He would teach them himself in the evenings; and when he felt his moral strength returning, he would go back to some civilized settlement to get a school for his boys. My chance visit to the mountain hut was not, I hope, without a service to its inmates, though not quite in the line of my duty as an inspector of schools.